

Message Text

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13 10

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FM AMCONSUL PONTA DELGADA

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 1375

INFO AMEMBASSY LISBON

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C O N F I D E N T I A L PONTA DELGADA 0009

EO 11652: GDS

TAGS: PINT, PO

SUB: AZOREAN DEVELOPMENTS

REF: PONTA DELGADA 469, 476 AND 486

1. JUNTA REGIONAL HAS DECIDED TO SEND THREE JUNTA MEMBERS, GENERAL MAGALHAES, (PRESIDENT), JACOME CORREIA, (VICE PRESIDENT, INDEPENDENT FROM SAO MIGUEL), AND MONJARDINO (INDEPENDENT FROM TERCEIRA)

TO LISBON TO DISCUSS WITH PRIME MINISTER AND REGISTER ITS OBJECTIONS TO NEW DECREE LAW WHICH DIMINISHES POWERS OF THE JUNTA. GROUP WILL TAKE WITH THEM PAPER SPELLING OUT POINT BY POINT JUNTA'S POSITION. ONE JUNTA MEMBER EXPLAINED THAT JUNTA REMAINS FIRMLY OPPOSED

TO NEW DRAFT LAW, BUT WILLING TO COMPROMISE ON A FEW MINOR POINTS. JUNTA HOPES THAT ITS REPRESENTATIVES WILL BE ABLE TO SEE AZEVEDO ON JANUARY 10 AND WILL BE ASKED TO REMAIN IN LISBON FOR COUNCIL OF MINISTERS MEETING ON JANUARY 13.

2. SOURCE SAID THIS WAS LAST EFFORT JUNTA PLANNED TO MAKE TO
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PERSUADE GOP TO CHANGE THE DECREE LAW. IF THE JANUARY 13 MEETING OF

THE
COUNCIL OF MINISTERS DOES NOT MODIFY THIS LAW WHICH HAS NOT BEEN PUBLISHED YET, THEN THE JUNTA WOULD MAKE THE LAW PUBLIC WITH THE FULL EXPECTATION THAT THIS WOULD TRIGGER A MAJOR CRISIS IN THE AZORES.

3. SOURCE ADDED GENERAL MAGALHAES HAD NOT BEEN WELL RECEIVED ON HIS LAST VISIT TO LISBON AND THAT MAGALHAES REPORTED SOME IN GOP WERE FED UP WITH AZOREAN COMPLAINTS.

4. MEANWHILE PUBLIC DISCUSSION OF DRAFT STATUTE OF AUTONOMY HAS INTENSIFIED WITH NIGHTLY TELEVISION PROGRAMS DEVOTED TO VIEWS OF POLITICAL PARTIES AND OTHERS. MUCH OF CRITICISM EXPRESSED FAVORS EVEN STRONGER AUTONOMY THAN PROVIDED FOR IN CURRENT DRAFT.

5. COMMENT: PREVAILING ATTITUDES IN AZORES CONINUES TO SUPPORT STRONG

AUTONOMY AND EXPECTS THE JUNTA REGIONAL TO REMAIN FIRM IN SUPPORT OF THIS AUTONOMY. WE BELIEVE JUNTA IN DEMANDING CHANGES IN NEW DCREE LAW HAS THE SUPPORT OF THE MAJORITY OF AZOREANS.

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